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Pupils' Well-Being Policy Framework of the European Schools

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Part One Introduction, Background, Fundamental Principles and Corsscutting Issues

Education in today's world has evolved over the centuries. While in past times schools were seen as the place where pupils are trained and formed for the world of work, later developments saw schools focus on educational development. In recent years, philosophy of education has moved to seeing the main objective of schools as a holistic one in nature and a driving force in education needs to be the development of the person as a whole. Academic development cannot be seen as separate to the development of the person. In this light, the teaching of subjects and the performance of each pupil in the different areas cannot be separated from the general well-being of the pupils concerned. Well-being has become a priority in our schools.

What is well-being? The general concept of well-being is a state of being comfortable, healthy or happy within oneself and with oneself. Being well means that a person has a general sense of contentment with their life and have an overall positive outlook towards life at present and confidence in the future. Feeling generally physically, psychologically, socially and emotionally healthy prepares a sound and fertile ground, for educational development to take place serenely aiding a child to develop to their full potential.

Well-being does not mean that a person is always happy and never has any challenging moments. Dealing with challenges is also part of our education and it would be a disservice to our pupils if we were to create an impression in our schools that life can be stress free or without problems. The challenge facing our schools today is how to offer our pupils holistic educational programmes that help them develop skills to face the highs and lows life will inevitably bring.

With this in mind, schools in this day and age need to have a forward-looking vision and see the importance of well-being as central and crucial in their planning and programming.

There can be a multitude of situations in life in general that affect the sense of well-being. This document focuses solely on the development of well-being in a European School setting.

In schools a number of unfortunate situations do affect a pupil's sense of well-being. The aim of this document, entitled Pupils' Well-Being Policy Framework, aims at providing guidelines to European Schools on how to manage common challenging situations that may lead to having an adverse effect on a pupil's sense of well-being. It is clear that schools need to have clear policy and procedural documents on how to tackle certain problems so as to be able to nip the difficulty in the bud, thus ensuring the least possible harm to any pupil. This policy framework has identified 6 common and recurrent difficulties most schools meet. These include managing situations related to child abuse, bullying, mental health issues, challenging behaviour, substance abuse and issues related to health, safety and security. This list of life challenging situations is by no means exhaustive. This policy framework is intended to be a document in development and other areas may be added in the future if the need arises.

This framework aims at providing the European Schools with guidelines so that each school will be in a position to develop policies and procedures for each area in a coherent manner, yet providing enough space for the school to develop such documents in accordance with their own realities and needs. Policy and procedural documents in such areas are important so that when schools meet such situations, all are informed about what to do, how to tackle as efficiently and effectively as possible, with the ultimate aim of terminating a situation or experience that is harmful to the pupil's sense of well-being.

I. Background behind the Development of Pupils' Well-Being Policy Framework

The European Schools Child Protection Policy was approved by the Board of Governors fourteen years ago, in 2008. Since then, the world has changed immeasurably, which led to the emergence of new challenges and intensification of existing ones.

In this context, international and European organisations and public bodies produced profuse legal documents in different domains: legislation/regulations, including international Conventions to which all Member States have adhered to with the correspondent implications to the European Schools system.

Therefore, a revision of the European Schools Child Protection Policy was required in order to be aligned and in compliance with the recent developments, as well as be in line with meeting the needs and challenges facing our pupils in this day and age.

In February 2021, the Joint Teaching Committee mandated the Secretary-General of the European Schools to start the process of reflection involving the different stakeholders of the European Schools, including pupils and parents, in order to revise the existing Child Protection Policy (2007-D-441) and to propose a framework for a comprehensive, school-specific "Pupils Well-being Policy" including besides a Child Protection Policy also other aspects of pupils' well-being.

I.1. Scope of the Pupils' Well-Being Policy Framework

In line with this mandate, the scope of this document has been enlarged to accommodate not only the principles of Child Protection in the sense of prevention of child abuse, but it also incorporates other challenging situations which are a reality in almost all schools.

To this end, the 'Pupils' Well-being Policy Framework', as explained above, addresses the following policy areas:

- Child Protection
- Anti-Bullying
- Mental Health
- Good Behaviour

- Anti-Substance (Ab)Use
- Health, Safety and Security

The distinctive feature of the European Schools system, whose schools are hosted by and in different Member States, with their own regulations at national/regional level, requires the conception of this document as a framework that should be applied at system level and complemented, and at time regulated, by the national/regional regulations. This circumstance requires that each school develops its own policies to build the bridge between the global/system-wide concepts and the national/local contexts.

This framework will be revised every five years at least or/and in function of the needs.

II. Purpose and Principles behind the Pupils' Well-Being Policy Framework

II.1. Purpose

The European Schools are committed to create and guarantee a safe and secure educational environment for all the pupils. In this sense, the European Schools aims at addressing persisting and emerging challenges and to develop and implement policies and procedures to protect, promote and fulfil the rights of the children/pupils in today's ever-changing world.

Namely, the policies envisage to:

- promote an inclusive environment, ensuring the rights of all pupils and preventing any type of discrimination,
- create safe and secure environment. i.e. buildings and school organisation,
- avoid in a preventive way the introduction of risks for the children in the schools,
- deal with allegations and/or evidence of harmful behaviour towards pupils.

II.2. Principle of Duty of Care

The protection, care, and welfare of children/pupils within the European Schools system are at the core of the schools' activities. As part of this duty of care, it is essential that all those entrusted with the oversight of the system (which also includes those involved in the appointment of staff and the management of school) do everything they can do to ensure that the pupils have a safe and secure educational environment and that everyone working with the pupils is fit to do so.

It is a child's right to feel safe and secure. This applies to their home and life outside of school, but it is also necessary as part of their school experience. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child¹ lists 54 different articles defining what these rights are. Protection from violence, right to

¹ <https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention/convention-text#>

healthy environment, protection from harmful drugs, and protection from sexual abuse are listed amongst these articles and are intricately linked to the framework being proposed. As are other articles concerning taking decisions in the best interest of the child, ensuring a child's right to life, survival and development and respecting a child's point of view. Included in this convention is also the aim of education. Article 29 states that children's education should help them fully develop their personalities, talents and abilities. It should teach them to understand their own rights, and to respect other people's rights, cultures and differences. The sense of safety and protection that emanates from this article is fundamentally linked to a school's duty of care towards its pupils.

II.3. Other Contributory Factors in the Development of this Policy Framework

Although the above described purpose and duty of care principle are the intrinsic motivation to develop procedures which aim at the protection of a child and their well-being, other factors contribute to the necessity of the development of this policy framework. These include:

- the commitment to protect and promote children's rights, complying with the principles and recommendations established in international and European policies concerning the protection of the rights of the children,
- awareness of very different practices by Member States concerning the checking of potential employees' suitability to be in contact with children. Different practices and procedures could leave schools in an exposed position from a legal viewpoint, in the event of an incident,
- the continuing occurrence of health and safety issues for schools to put right, for instance in the conduct of out of school activities,
- increasing emphasis in Member States within the European Union on children's rights, with a likely increase in liability claims if negligence is asserted and proved.

In this context, it should also be recalled that in accordance with Article 6.2 of the Convention defining the Statute of the European Schools, the School shall be treated in each Member State, subject to the specific provisions of the Convention, as educational establishments governed by public law of the hosting Member State. This leads to inevitable variables in legislation, priorities and approaches. Among the problems the system faces in ensuring children's safety are the variables which are inevitable in a context in which there are twenty-seven nations with different laws, priorities and approaches, seconding teachers to thirteen schools in six different countries.

Such variables include:

- widely different legislation on the age of consent,
- different approaches to appointment of teachers in terms of procedures, requirements and practice,
- potential discrepancy between the laws and requirements of an appointing country and the laws and requirements of the country in which the appointee will work,

- potential conflict between the requirement for disclosure and the rights of individuals to privacy and protection under national and international legislation,
- the need to check other adults working with children in the schools on a voluntary basis,
- the need to check any other staff who have access to children,
- the protection of children in all aspects of their education.

It is important to make sure, however, that these barriers and difficulties identified should not impede the implementation of an effective pupils' well-being policy. It is essential to ensure that all pupils of any nationality in any of the European Schools will be guaranteed the same level of safety, security and care through our appointment procedures and the way we check all staff.

III. Crosscutting Issues

This policy framework proposes a scaffolding structure for schools to be able to develop policies and procedures in the different areas indicated above. While national legislation, local services and the school's individual needs have to be given great importance and taken into consideration when developing whole school policy documents, there are a number of crosscutting issues that are relevant to all thirteen European Schools.

III.1. Main Elements of all Policy Documents

While all documents need to address the needs of pupils in the school, it is imperative that three main elements are the backbone of such policies, where applicable. These are:

1. Prevention (the concept of promotion also needs to be included where applicable)
2. Intervention
3. Training

If schools are to tackle challenging situations effectively and bring an end to harmful experiences, all policy documents need to have clear plans and structures for the prevention of a situation (eg bullying, child abuse, etc). Prevention programmes need to be put in place mainly for pupils, but also for parents/legal representatives. Certain policy areas, such as mental health, need to delve into the aspect of promotion which focuses on actively improving pupils' well-being.

Such documents need to clearly also explain what intervention will take place when such situations arise. Finally, the third important element is training for school staff on how to prevent situations occurring, how to recognize emerging situations and what action to take so as to intervene so that a harmful experience is brought to a halt thus ensuring that the well-being of a pupil is safeguarded.

When developing such policy documents, it is recommended that schools take an evidence-based approach prior to drafting the policy document based on the needs of the school. The collection of evidence may be fulfilled in several ways, including survey, questionnaires, focus groups, interviews

and school experience. Such research would help a school understand their reality and base policy development on a sound foundation.

III.2. Communication of Policy Documents to School Communities

Once the school has developed its policy documents in the different areas, it is crucial that there is effective publication and dissemination to ensure ownership of the policy and compliance of all members of the school community.

It is the responsibility of everyone concerned to act according to the intentions of these principles and to follow the school's policies and procedures in order to guarantee the welfare of the pupils. All members of the school community ensure that they and others follow these regulations.

Another aspect of communication across the European School system may be the sharing of good practices amongst schools. Many of our schools already have documents related to the areas addressed in this document. The exchange of these documents across the entire school system would be of great benefit and in many cases a school would not need to start from scratch while developing a specific policy document.

III.3. Staff

Staff who have access to children in the European Schools will be asked to provide a criminal record document (or equivalent documentation from the country the individual is a citizen of or has been in employment so far) before beginning the employment.

Seconded staff

Each member state is responsible for ensuring that staff seconded to a European School whether in their country or another are fit to be in contact with children and that the national legislative requirements for teachers have been met, including child protection legislation.

Locally recruited staff

Each school is responsible for ensuring that all locally recruited staff are fit to be in contact with children, and that the local legislation (particularly child protection legislation) is observed.

Other employees working with children within the school

All those employed in a school who have unaccompanied access to children (canteen, transport, extra-school activities, security guards, etc) should be checked against the appropriate legislation, and if none is applicable, steps should be taken to ensure as far as possible that these people are cleared.

The School will exercise all reasonable means to ensure that unauthorised persons cannot gain entry and that unauthorised visitors can be easily identified.

III.4. Out of School Activities

For school activities taking place outside the school, it is incumbent on the school to verify that pupils' well-being is guaranteed and school policies and procedures apply both in school and also out of

school activities. All such activities should be subject to appropriate risk assessment procedures in which teachers accompanying the pupils must be fully involved.

The same policy applies inside the school must be applied in the context of school trips and other school outings. Parents/legal representatives must be kept fully informed about all aspects of school expeditions in which their children are involved.

III.5. Complaints Handling System

Each policy document should also include a user-friendly and effective complaints handling system which includes:

- clear information about how and to whom to complain,
- agreed procedure for following up complaints, including respect for confidentiality when appropriate but with proper information to the person complained about,
- keeping up records of complaints made and action taken,
- information to those other members of the school who need to know,
- advertising access to local or national help lines.

III.6. Confidentiality

The life situations referred to in this policy framework document very often address very sensitive and personal information. It is very important that the issue of confidentiality is explained very clearly to all the members of the school community, especially pupils. Pupils are free to open up with any school employee on whatever issue if they feel they need help. It should be clearly explained in each policy document that all information received will be kept confidential, except in three situations. If a pupil (under the legal age of the host country) discloses:

- a. Harm to self,
- b. Harm to others,
- c. Harm being done to the pupil.

In such situations, the school cannot keep matters confidential and take no action, but must intervene so as to protect the minor concerned. Interventions may include informing the parents/legal representatives, and/or seeking professional help within and outside the school, such as medical services or social services. All school policy documents should include a clear definition of confidentiality.

III.7. Data Protection

It is also very important that each policy document published by the school addresses the issue of data protection, especially when it comes to the storage, keeping and destruction of records, as well as the issue of accessibility to such records. This information will depend on host country legislation and regulations.

Part Two Child Protection Policy

I. Definition of 'Child Abuse' and Scope of the Policy

Child abuse is when a parent or person of responsibility or another person, whether through action or failing to act, causes injury, death, emotional harm, or risk of serious harm to a child. It is the physical, psychological maltreatment or sexual molestation of a child. Various forms of abuse can co-exist in child abuse cases.

“A child” means a person under the age of 18 years (or under the legal age in the host country of the European School). The following is without prejudice to applicable national criminal and child protection laws and regulations.

I.1. Scope

All school personnel must be alert to the possibility that children with whom they are in contact may be experiencing abuse or neglect. This document contains guidance on the four main types of abuse and how abuse and neglect can be recognized.

I.2. Reasonable Grounds for Concern

The Director and relevant Deputy Director should always be informed where a person has reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected. If the symptoms of abuse are ignored, it could result in on-going harm to the child. It is not necessary for a person to prove that abuse has occurred to report a concern. All that is required is that the person has reasonable grounds for concern. Where a concern is reported, the information will be carefully considered with any other information available and an assessment will be carried out where sufficient risk is identified. It is not the school's role to investigate but to refer and to seek help for the child.

Reasonable grounds for a child protection or welfare concern include:

- Evidence (e.g. injury or behaviour) that is consistent with abuse and is unlikely to have been caused in any other way,
- Any concern about possible sexual abuse,
- Consistent signs that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect,
- A child saying or indicating by other means that he or she has been abused,
- Admission or indication by an adult or a child of an alleged abuse they committed,
- An account from a person who saw the child being abused.

I.3. Types of Child Abuse and How they might be recognised

All school personnel should be familiar with signs and behaviours that may be indicative of child abuse.

This document describes the four main types of abuse: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse and outlines how abuse and neglect can be recognised. A child may be subjected to

one or more forms of abuse at any given time. Abuse and neglect can occur within the family, in a community or in an institutional setting. The abuser may be someone known to the child or a stranger, and can be an adult or another child.

In a situation where abuse is alleged to have been carried out by another child, it should be considered a child welfare and protection issue for both children and child protection procedures should be adhered to for both the alleged victim and the alleged abuser.

An important factor in determining whether the behaviour is abuse or neglect is the impact of that behaviour on the child rather than the intention of the parent/carer/other person.

The definitions of neglect and abuse presented in this chapter are not legal definitions. They are intended to describe ways in which a child might experience abuse and how this abuse may be recognised.

The procedures for reporting child abuse or neglect can be found in later in this policy. If it is considered that a child is in immediate danger the relevant National Authorities should be contacted without delay.

I.4. Neglect

Child neglect is the most frequently reported category of abuse internationally. On-going chronic neglect is recognised as being extremely harmful to the development and well-being of the child and may have serious long-term negative consequences.

Neglect occurs when a child does not receive adequate care or supervision to the extent that the child is harmed physically or developmentally. It is generally defined in terms of an omission of care, where a child's health, development or welfare is impaired by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, medical care, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety. Emotional neglect may also lead to the child having difficulties of attachment. The extent of the damage to the child's health, development or welfare is influenced by a range of factors. These factors include the extent, if any, of positive influence in the child's life, as well as the age of the child and the frequency and consistency of neglect.

Neglect is associated with poverty, but not necessarily caused by it. It is strongly linked to parental substance misuse, domestic violence and parental mental illness and disability.

A reasonable concern for the child's welfare would exist when neglect becomes typical of the relationship between the child and the parent or carer. This may become apparent where the child is seen over a period of time, or the effects of neglect may be obvious based on having seen the child once.

I.5. Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the systematic emotional or psychological ill treatment of a child as part of the overall relationship between a caregiver and a child. Once-off and occasional difficulties between a

parent/carer and child are not considered emotional abuse. Abuse occurs when a child's basic need for attention, affection, approval, consistency and security are not met, due to incapacity or indifference from their parent or caregiver. Emotional abuse can also occur when adults responsible for taking care of children are unaware of and unable (for a range of reasons) to meet the children's emotional and developmental needs. Emotional abuse is not easy to recognise because the effects are not easily seen.

A reasonable concern for the child's welfare would exist when the behaviour becomes typical of the relationship between the child and the parent or carer.

There may be no physical signs of emotional abuse unless it occurs with another type of abuse. A child may show signs of emotional abuse through their actions or emotions in several ways. These include insecure attachment, unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental underachievement, risk taking and aggressive behaviour.

It should be noted that no one indicator is conclusive evidence of emotional abuse. Emotional abuse is more likely to impact negatively on a child where it is persistent over time and where there is a lack of other protective factors.

I.6. Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is when someone deliberately hurts a child physically or puts them at risk of being physically hurt. It may occur as a single incident or as a pattern of incidents. A reasonable concern exists where the child's health and/or development is, may be, or has been damaged as a result of suspected physical abuse.

I.7. Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or arousal, or for that of others. It includes the child being involved in sexual acts (ie) contact sexual abuse (masturbation, fondling, oral or penetrative sex) or exposing the child to sexual activity directly or through pornography (ie) non-contact sexual abuse.

Child sexual abuse may cover a wide spectrum of abusive activities, including grooming and on line sexual exploitation. It rarely involves just a single incident and, in many instances, occurs over a number of years. Child sexual abuse most commonly happens within the family, including older siblings and extended family members.

Cases of sexual abuse mainly come to light through disclosure by the child or his or her siblings/friends, from the suspicions of an adult and/or by physical symptoms.

It should be remembered that sexual activity involving a young person may be sexual abuse even if the young person concerned does not themselves recognise it as abusive.

In relation to child sexual abuse, it should be noted that an age of consent to sexual intercourse might be set under applicable national criminal law. Any sexual relationship where one or both parties are under that statutory age of consent would be illegal. Where a school becomes aware of underage sexual intercourse, the school should take appropriate steps to inform the child's parents. However, not all such cases would necessarily be regarded as child sexual abuse, for instance if both parties are underage.

I.8. Exceptions

There are certain situations that involve underage sexual activity that do not necessarily constitute child sexual abuse. This will greatly depend on member state legislation with regard to the age of consent. Generally, a sexual relationship between one or both parties who is under the legal age in a particular member state is considered as abusive in nature. However, there are certain factors that need to be taken into consideration when analysing situations and working towards defining if child sexual abuse has occurred or not. Such factors may include:

- The child concerned is aged between 15 and 17 years old and may be engaging in sexual activity.
- The age difference between him or her and the other party to the sexual activity is not more than 24 months (however one has to ensure that there is no experience of violence, coercion, and/or power relationship involved).
- There is no material difference in capacity or maturity between the parties engaged in the sexual activity concerned.
- The relationship between the parties engaged in the sexual activity concerned is not intimidatory or exploitative of either party.

II. Prevention

II.1. Recruitment

School authorities must ensure compliance with the requirements of police clearance of the host country. Police clearance should not, however, take the place of normal recruitment procedures, such as seeking and following up of references and ensuring that any unexplained gaps in employment records/CV are satisfactorily accounted for. Whether a person is being considered for employment or other roles in the school, comprehensive procedures for the checking of the person's suitability to work with children are an essential element of child protection practice.

- Seconded staff – all member states have the responsibility to ensure that seconded member of staff have appropriate level of vetting required to work in schools.
- Locally recruited staff – all staff must provide a certificate of police clearance before beginning work in school. (Extrait de casier judiciaire (modèle II) for Belgium).

- Contacts should include a clause obliging employees to abide by the schools Child Protection Procedures.

II.2. Prevention Programmes and Awareness Raising

Effective child protection depends on the skills, knowledge and values of personnel working with children and families, as well as co-operation between agencies (interagency) and within agencies (intra-agency). Relevant training and education is an important means of achieving this. It is imperative that all school personnel and stakeholders have the necessary familiarity with these procedures to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities therein. It is envisaged that this will be achieved by the school developing a culture of awareness and knowledge of these procedures amongst all stakeholders and, where appropriate, ensuring that available training is undertaken. Each school should endeavour to raise awareness of its child protection policy by running campaigns/awareness weeks during the school year, with workshops for pupils and information sharing evening with parents. Each host country has a National agency (child safety service) which should be contacted to support these school led campaigns. They can offer literary resources for school staff and parents to consult. Many offer prevention programmes for different stake holders.

III. Training of staff

Child protection training for staff should take place every year in order to keep procedures active, raise awareness and inform and update both new and old staff members. An interactive online child protection course for the European Schools could eventually be created. Staff members would be obliged to complete the course and provide certification given at the end of the session.

Child safety services of each host country may provide support to school employees.

IV. Intervention

IV.1. Responsibilities of all School Personnel

School personnel are especially well placed to observe changes in children's behaviour, their lack of development or outward signs of abuse. In any situation where a member of school personnel receives an allegation or has a suspicion that a child may have been abused or neglected, is being abused or neglected, or is at risk of abuse or neglect, he or she shall, without delay, report the matter to the Director/Deputy Director. While the responsibility remains with the Director, a school *may* have a member of staff designated to coordinate and focus on child protection issues.

All school personnel shall familiarise themselves with this information to enable them to meet their reporting obligations under these procedures. It is important that all school personnel consult this policy and liaise with the Director/Deputy Director (or the designated member of staff) where they have a concern that a child may have been abused or neglected, is being abused or neglected, or is at risk of abuse or neglect.

The safety and well-being of the child must take priority over concerns about adults against whom an allegation may be made.

Each European School should develop its own Child Protection Procedures, in line with host country legislation and services. It is important also that each European School connect with external actors/associations within the school community and each national system.

IV.2. Dealing with Disclosures from Children

An abused child is likely to be under severe emotional stress and a member of school personnel may be the only adult whom the child is prepared to trust. Great care shall be taken not to damage that trust.

When information is offered in confidence, the member of school personnel will need tact and sensitivity in responding to the disclosure. *The member of school personnel will need to reassure the child, and endeavour to retain his or her trust, while explaining the need for action which will necessarily involve other adults being informed. It is important to tell the child that everything possible will be done to protect and support him or her, but not to make promises that cannot be kept e.g. promising not to tell anyone else.*

Confidentiality cannot be kept when harm is being done to a child.

It is important to deal with any allegation of abuse or neglect in a sensitive and competent way through listening to and facilitating the child to tell about the problem, rather than interviewing the child about details of what happened.

The least amount of people possible should speak to the directly to the child.

Disclosures of abuse must be dealt with sensitively and professionally. The following approach is suggested as best practice for dealing with these disclosures:

- React calmly
- Listen carefully and attentively
- Take the child seriously
- Reassure the child that they have taken the right action in talking to you
- Do not promise to keep anything secret
- Ask questions for clarification only. Do not ask leading questions
- Check back with the child that what you have heard is correct and understood
- Do not express any opinions about the alleged abuser
- Ensure that the child understands the procedures that will follow
- Make a written record of the conversation as soon as possible, in as much detail as possible
- Treat the information confidentially.

The duty of the recipient of such information is to follow the reporting requirements outlined in this policy. It must always be remembered that school personnel have a supportive, not an investigative role. One can never be 100% sure about any allegation reported but it is best to act with vigilance than not to act at all.

IV.3. Record Keeping

When child abuse or neglect is suspected, it is essential to have a written record of all the information available. School personnel shall note carefully what they have observed and when they observed it. Signs of physical injury shall be described in detail and, if appropriate, sketched.

Any comment by the child concerned, or by any other person, about how an injury occurred shall be recorded, preferably quoting words actually used, as soon as possible after the comment has been made. The record of the discussion shall be signed, dated and given to the Director who shall retain it.

The Director shall record all concerns or allegations of child abuse brought to his or her attention, and the actions taken following receipt of a concern or allegation of child abuse.

The Director shall retain a copy of every report submitted by him or her and shall keep a record of any further actions to be taken and of any further communications with national authorities.

All records created shall be regarded as highly confidential and placed in a secure location.

Directors child protection overview report to the Administration Board

At each Administration Board, the directors report to the Administration shall include a Child Protection Oversight Report containing information under 4 headings as follows

- (1) Allegations of abuse made against members of school personnel
- (2) Other child protection concerns in respect of pupils in the school (i.e. concerns that do not involve any allegation of abuse against a member of school personnel)
- (3) Child protection concerns arising from alleged bullying behaviour amongst pupils and
- (4) Summary data in respect of reporting.

IV.4. Reporting of Concerns

Action to be taken by all school personnel (teaching and non-teaching)

If any member of school personnel receives an allegation or has a suspicion that a child may have been abused or neglected, is being abused or neglected, or is at risk of abuse or neglect, he or she shall, without delay, report the matter to the Director of the school or his/her delegate, who is responsible for ensuring that the reporting procedures in this document are followed.

The Director shall make a written record of any concern brought to his or her attention by a member of school personnel and shall place this record in a secure location. All school personnel must have due regard to the need for confidentiality at all times. The supports of the school shall continue to be made available to the child(ren) concerned.

Where the allegation or concern relates to the Director, the member of school personnel shall, without delay, report the matter to the Secretary General of the European Schools.

In such cases, Secretary General shall assume the role normally undertaken by the Director followed.

It is good practice to inform the parent/carer that a report concerning his or her child is being made and the reasons for the decision to make the report. However, it is not necessary to inform a parent/carer that a report is being made

- (1) if by doing so, the child will be placed at further risk or
- (2) in cases where the family's knowledge of the report could impair a follow up risk assessment
- (3) if the reporter is of the reasonable opinion that by doing so it may place the reporter at risk of harm from the family.

IV.5. Allegations or Suspicions of Child Abuse regarding School Employees

Where an allegation of abuse is made against a school employee, in this context, employee also includes an unpaid volunteer and abuse refers to abuse as described earlier in this document.

The most important consideration to be taken into account is the protection of children, and their safety and well-being must be the priority. Each school also has a duty and responsibility, as an employer, in respect of its employees.

It is important to note that there are two procedures to be followed:

- (1) the reporting procedure in respect of the allegation/suspicion;
- (2) the procedure for dealing with the employee.

In general, the same person shall not have responsibility for dealing with the reporting issue (eg Deputy Director) and the employment issue (eg Director).

In the context of allegations or suspicions of child abuse regarding school employees the primary goal is to protect the children within the school. However, school employees can be subject to erroneous or malicious allegations. The employee shall be treated fairly which includes the right not to be judged in advance of a full and fair process and as applicable, in accordance with the relevant disciplinary procedures

At all stages it should be remembered that the first priority is to ensure that no child is exposed to unnecessary risk. The employer shall as a matter of urgency ensure that any necessary protective

measures are taken, including where there is an urgent child safeguarding requirement to immediately absent an employee from the school.

V. Follow-up

Professional handling of child abuse involves conducting investigations, and supporting the child with medical care, psychological therapy and social work with the family. The school will cooperate with the relevant agencies tasked with each case. It is necessary to evaluate, review and update school child protection procedures and policies every two years.

VI. Features of Abuse

VI.1. Neglect

The following are features of child neglect:

- Children being left alone without adequate care and supervision
- Malnourishment, lacking food, unsuitable food or erratic feeding
- Non-organic failure to thrive, i.e. a child not gaining weight due not only to malnutrition but also emotional deprivation
- Failure to provide adequate care for the child's medical and developmental needs, including intellectual stimulation
- Inadequate living conditions – unhygienic conditions, environmental issues, including lack of adequate heating and furniture
- Lack of adequate clothing
- Inattention to basic hygiene
- Lack of protection and exposure to danger, including moral danger or lack of supervision appropriate to the child's age
- Persistent failure to attend school
- Abandonment or desertion

VI.2. Emotional Abuse

- Rejection
- Lack of comfort and love
- Lack of attachment
- Lack of proper stimulation (e.g. fun and play)
- Lack of continuity of care (e.g. frequent moves, particularly unplanned)

- Continuous lack of praise and encouragement
- Persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming of the child
- Conditional parenting in which care or affection of a child is made contingent on his or her behaviours or actions
- Extreme over-protectiveness
- Inappropriate non-physical punishment (e.g. locking child in bedroom)
- Ongoing family conflicts and family violence
- Seriously inappropriate expectations of a child relative to his or her age and stage of development

VI.3. Physical Abuse

- Physical punishment
- Beating, slapping, hitting or kicking
- Pushing, shaking or throwing
- Pinching, biting, choking or hair-pulling, burning
- Use of excessive force in handling
- Deliberate poisoning
- Suffocation
- Fabricated/induced illness
- Female genital mutilation

VI.4. Sexual Abuse

- Any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of the child
- An invitation to sexual touching or intentional touching or molesting of a child's body whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification
- Masturbation in the presence of a child or the involvement of a child in an act of masturbation
- Sexual intercourse with a child, whether oral, vaginal or anal
- Sexual exploitation of a child, which includes:
 - Inviting, inducing or coercing a child to engage in prostitution or the production of child pornography [for example, exhibition, modeling or posing for the purpose of sexual arousal, gratification or sexual act, including its recording (on film, videotape or other media) or the manipulation, for those purposes, of an image by computer or other means]
 - Inviting, coercing or inducing a child to participate in, or to observe, any sexual, indecent or obscene act

- Showing sexually explicit material to children, which is often a feature of the 'grooming' process by perpetrators of abuse
- Exposing a child to inappropriate or abusive material through information and communication technology
- Consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an underage person

VI.5. Circumstances which may make children more vulnerable to abuse and neglect

School personnel dealing with children need to be alert to the possibility that a welfare or protection concern may arise in relation to children with whom they come in contact. A child needs to have someone they can trust in order to feel able to disclose abuse they may be experiencing. They need to know that they will be believed and that they will get the help they need. Without these things, they may be vulnerable to continuing abuse.

Some children may be more vulnerable to abuse than others. Also, there may be particular times or circumstances when a child may be more vulnerable to abuse in their lives. In particular, children with disabilities, children with communication difficulties, children in care or living away from home, or children with a parent or parents with problems in their own lives may be more susceptible to abuse.

The following list is intended to assist in identifying the range of issues in a child's life that may place them at greater risk of abuse or neglect. It is important to remember that the presence of any of these factors does not necessarily mean that a child in those circumstances or settings is being abused.

Parent or Carer Factors increasing vulnerability:

- Drug and alcohol misuse
- Addiction, including gambling
- Mental health issues
- Parental disability issues, including learning or intellectual disability
- Conflictual relationships
- Domestic violence
- Adolescent parents

Child Factors increasing vulnerability:

- Age
- Gender
- Sexuality
- Disability

- Mental health issues including self-harm and suicide
- Communication difficulties
- Trafficked/Exploited
- Previous Abuse
- Young carer

Community Factors increasing vulnerability:

- Cultural, ethnic, religious or faith based norms in the family or community which may not meet the standards of child welfare or protection required in this jurisdiction
- Culture-specific practices, including:
 - Female genital mutilation
 - Forced marriage
 - Honour-based violence
 - Radicalisation

Environmental factors increasing vulnerability:

- Housing issues
- Children who are out of home and not living with their parents, whether temporarily or permanently
- Poverty/Begging
- Bullying
- Internet and social media-related concerns

Poor motivation and poor willingness of parents/guardians to engage:

- Non-attendance at appointments
- Lack of insight or understanding of how the child is being affected
- Lack of understanding about what needs to happen to bring about change
- Avoidance of contact and reluctance to work with services
- Inability or unwillingness to comply with agreed plans

These factors should be considered as part of being alert to the possibility that a child may be at risk of suffering abuse and in bringing reasonable concerns to the attention the management.

Concerns in relation to an adult who may pose a risk to children

While in most cases of concern for the welfare or safety of a child develop from one's own observation or knowledge of a particular child or his or her family. Sometimes concerns arise in relation to whether an adult may pose a risk to children, even if there is no specific child named in relation to the concern. For example, on the basis of known or suspected past behaviour, a concern could exist about the risk an individual may pose to children with whom he or she may have contact. Any such reasonable concerns should be reported to the management, who will try to establish whether or not any child is currently at risk from the individual in question. Where school personnel have concerns as to whether an adult may pose a risk to children, even if there is no specific child named in relation to the concern but are not sure whether to report the matter the Director/Deputy Director shall seek advice from the national authorities.

Part Three Mental Health Policy

I. Definition of Mental Health

Mental health is intricately linked with well-being. A person's condition with regard to their psychological and emotional well-being contributes to the state of mental health. Our state of mental health determines how we handle stress, relate to others and make choices. Mental health is important from childhood through to adulthood. Just as much as we are encouraged to look after our mental health, we should also be focusing on developing a healthy state of mental well-being. Pupils experiencing harmful and negative situations such as child abuse, bullying, substance abuse etc have a great chance of suffering from mental health problems.

The most common mental health problems in childhood and adolescence are:

- Anxiety Disorders
- Eating Disorders
- Stress-Related Disorders
- Clinical depression
- Suicidal thoughts and actions, and self-harm

II. Prevention and Promotion

Prevention is better than cure. Mental health issues have been somewhat of a taboo for many years. This is even more so when it comes to children and adolescents. Schools have a role to play in the prevention of the development of mental health issues and also the promotion of improving pupil well-being. While parents/legal representatives remain the main people responsible for the upbringing of a child, and are the ones who are responsible at seeing what is best for that child, schools have an educational role in creating awareness about mental health issues.

II.1. Awareness Raising Sessions with Pupils

European Schools, in accordance with their needs and realities should have an awareness-raising, age appropriate mental health programme, whereby qualified and/or experienced professionals are invited to meet with pupils and give an overview of mental health issues in children and adolescents. Such awareness raising sessions should also include information on how to strengthen one's capacity to regulate emotions, enhance alternatives to risk-taking behaviour, build resilience when managing difficult situations and promote social support networks.

II.2. Awareness Raising Sessions with Parents or Legal Representatives

Parents/legal representatives have the main role in ensuring their child develops a healthy mental state. Just as much as parents are responsible of feeding, clothing, housing and caring for their child.

It is also their responsibility to ensure that their child's life, both within the family and out, is serene and peaceful which are two conducive elements to developing a sense of well-being. Having said this, parents may at times not be aware of developing issues related to mental health. Therefore, schools should develop and implement an awareness raising programme concerning mental health issues specifically for parents/legal representatives. Professionals delivering sessions about different mental health issues may be invited. School professionals who have experience in the field may also be considered for their contribution. The aim of these sessions should be information sharing, recognition of symptoms, initial first aid and where to seek help.

III. Intervention

Pupils may or may not realise that they have or are developing a mental health problem. They also may or may not seek help in school. However, schools need to have clear procedures of how to help if they become the holders of such knowledge.

A pupil may trust any member of staff with a psychological, emotional difficulty. It is important for all staff to know how to deal with such situations in terms of what to say, what not to say and where to refer. Basic training in helping skills is always helpful, so that a member of staff knows how to listen, empathise and make non-judgemental statements. Pupils may also not open up with a trusted member of staff. However, they may open up with parents who may seek help from the school or may open up to friends who will also seek help from a member of staff. Another possibility is that a pupil does not speak about a difficulty they are experiencing, but shows signs that may be a cause of concern to members of staff (non-verbal disclosures). Therefore, whatever way the information is relayed, it is important for schools to have clear intervention procedures of how to manage a worrying situation related to mental health and as much as possible, recognise any concerning signs. Schools may also have teams of professionals who work together to manage such situations (eg Care Teams, Crisis Teams, etc). School psychologists also have a very crucial role in dealing with such realities both in terms of supporting individuals, but also work with entire classes and/or groups of pupils who are affected by such realities.

III.1. Nursery/Primary Cycle

If a member of staff is in possession of information or has a strong suspicion of a serious mental health issue of a child in the nursery/primary cycle, the member of staff should refer the case to the school psychologist. Once the details of the situation have been shared and understood, the school psychologist will draft a plan of action. This may include class observation, gathering of information and/or immediate referral to parents. If there is an urgency to the situation, the parents/legal representatives must be informed immediately. In the case of a possible health urgency, the medical services may need to be brought in urgently. In very serious and urgent situations, the Assistant Deputy Director and the Deputy Director of the cycle will be informed. The Deputy Director of the Secondary cycle will keep the Director informed.

III.2. Secondary Cycle

If a member of staff is in possession of information or has a strong suspicion of a serious mental health issue of a child in the secondary cycle, the member of staff should refer the case to the Educational Advisor firstly. The Educational Advisor will evaluate the situation. Certain actions may be necessary at this level such as observation, speaking with the pupil concerned etc. There may be cases where the Educational Advisor may need to refer to the school psychologist. Once the details of the situation have been shared and understood, the school psychologist will draft a plan of action. This may include class observation, gathering of information and/or immediate referral to parents. If there is an urgency to the situation, the parents/legal representatives must be informed immediately. In the case of a possible health urgency, the medical services may need to be brought in urgently. In very serious and urgent situations, the Assistant Deputy Director and the Deputy Director of the cycle will be informed. The Deputy Director of the Secondary cycle will keep the Director informed.

III.3. Suicide

In the unfortunate circumstance that a suicide has occurred in the school, each school should have a Tragic Events procedural document so that a certain protocol is followed to ensure appropriate sharing of information with the school community and also psychological support for pupils and staff. This procedural document should list out clearly what actions are taken in such tragic circumstances.

IV. Training

As one can conclude from the preceding paragraphs, training of staff is important. The word staff is used purposely as opposed solely to teachers. Any member of staff in the school may become the holder of serious information and thus some form of basic training and awareness raising needs to take place. It is recommended that schools offer training in basic helping skills to their staff so that they are able to listen empathically and respond appropriately if they are trusted with confidential information. Schools also need to consider having a training session on their procedural document so that staff will know what services the school offers in terms of prevention and intervention and what steps needs to be taken when a case related to a mental health issue arises.

V. Confidentiality

It is very important for the school to have a general confidentiality clause. When pupils share personal information with a member of staff, if the pupil is a minor, the information will be kept confidential, except in the following 3 circumstances:

- (1) Harm to self
- (2) Harm to others
- (3) Harm being done to you

In the beginning of a school year, it is important for schools to communicate the terms of confidentiality with the school community.

Part Four Anti-Bullying Policy

I. Definition of ‘Bullying’

A commonly used definition is that bullying is *intentionally* and *repeatedly* causing distress or harm to the same individual. In addition, it is difficult for the bullied children to defend themselves. This refers to the power *imbalance between the parties* – the bullied child usually has less power or physical strength than the bully or bullies.

Bullying can take many different forms. Most often it consists of *verbal abuse* and public ridicule of the target such as

- name calling
- insult
- negative comments (racist, sexist, etc.)
- teasing
- threatening
- harassment
- indifference, isolation from the group
- emotional
- etc.

There are, however, many other forms that can include physical assault, relational assault (gossips, manipulating friendships, intimidation, excluding, etc.). When sexual comments or actions are involved we speak about sexual harassment or sexual bullying, which may again take different forms (e.g. sexual jokes, comments, rumours, posting content or photos via social media, asking/offering to participate in any sort of sexual action, etc.) whether in person or online.

The most recent and widespread variety is the so-called cyberbullying (also referred to as *online bullying* or *cyberharassment*). According to the UNICEF definition² *cyberbullying* is bullying with the use of digital technologies which can take place on social media, messaging platforms, gaming platforms and mobile phones (for example email, social networks and instant messenger).

The document *Anti-bullying Practices from the Repository of the European Platform for Investing in Children (EPIC)* also stresses the fast recent spreading of this form: ‘Over the past years, children also increasingly experience bullying online. ‘Cyber-bullying’, the fourth type³ of bullying, is used to describe various acts of harassment, threats and harmful behaviour carried out between peers through the use

² <https://www.unicef.org/end-violence/how-to-stop-cyberbullying>

³ The study identifies four basic types: direct bullying, indirect bullying, discriminatory bullying and cyber-bullying.

of electronic media. This may include disseminating videos, photographs and messages through social media, email and mobile phones with the aim of causing humiliation.⁴

Often the targets are bullied in more than one way and bullying is more than just single attacks. It is a rather stable relationship between the bully and the bullied child, and this relationship is further embedded in the larger peer setting.⁵

Bullying is a social activity in which more than the two 'protagonists' are involved. It has been evidenced that those who observe the incident the so called 'bystanders' can take the role of the reinforcers or the helpers of the bully, the defenders of the bullied or even the onlookers of the incident. The roles that the peers take in a bullying situation is particularly important for its perpetuation or the minimisation of the phenomenon.

Bullying can similarly be described as behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. It is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences (or perceived differences⁶) between children.

Face-to-face bullying and cyberbullying can often happen alongside each other. But cyberbullying leaves a digital footprint – a record that can prove useful and provide evidence to help stop the abuse.

It is important to make a difference between bullying and other, in many instances similar, but basically different behaviour patterns like relational conflict. The main differences can be summarised as follows:

Relational Conflict	Bullying
Happens occasionally	Repeated hurtful behaviour
Accidental	Deliberate
Equal Power	Imbalance of power
Remorseful	No remorse
Effort to solve problem	No effort to solve problem

In a school context it is even more important to identify these two different approaches as they require different reaction from the school community, in the first place from pedagogical staff, management and, in the latter case, often also the school psychologists. But these approaches should be treated with the same importance.

⁴ Produced for the European Platform for Investing in Children (EPIC), November 2020. Authors: Dr Michaela Bruckmayer and Silvia Galimberti. Publications Office of the European Union, 2020. On this topic see also: <https://www.webwise.ie/trending/dealing-with-cyberbullying-in-schools-2/>; <https://www.coe.int/en/web/children/bullying>;

⁵ KiVa Anti-bullying Program | KiVa Program & University of Turku

⁶ Following the definition by DfE

II. Prevention

It is widely accepted that, like in most cases of incidents, **prevention** is the most effective way to counter bullying. The key of prevention is a robust and general approach against any form of bullying, discrimination and harassment based on **respect** as a fundamental value of the whole school community. The school must promote an inclusive ethos in which respect and tolerance to differentiation is a value of paramount importance. The school management has to make sure that this message is conveyed to each and every member of the community in many different ways. Some of these are as follows.

- (1) It should be clearly stated and explained in the relevant school documents (school rules, parents information brochures and booklets, mission descriptions and statements, codes of behaviour and good practices, etc.) that all types or forms of bullying are regarded as unacceptable behaviour by the school community.
- (2) Class teachers and other staff members will discuss the negative effects of bullying, discrimination and harassment with their pupils, fostering a positive caring and supportive atmosphere within the class and the whole school. The topic may also be an item of the teacher-parent and management-parents' meetings (could also be during the general information session for parents at the beginning of the school year).

The theme of bullying, discrimination and harassment should be discussed in different subject related contexts where possible (especially literature related subjects like Language 1 and Language 2 or Ethics/Religion but also others). Programs and projects for social and prosocial skills training, for empathy development, for anger and frustration management, for assertiveness training and low esteem raising implemented through the Curriculum, are of paramount importance as preventative practices for tackling and minimizing bullying and any other type of aggressive or unacceptable behaviour.

III. Training and Raising Awareness

It is also important that staff receive adequate training on bullying as part of the prevention policy of the school. In order to raise awareness and draw attention to critical situations and suspect of cases, it is advisable that this training draws attention to the different warning signs that may indicate that a child is a victim of bullying. The training sessions may involve parents as well since the symptoms, although different in nature from those identified in a school environment, will most probably occur in the home context too. The list below summarises some of the typical signs. However, we should always keep in mind that many of these symptoms may indicate other problems and that this list is not exhaustive.

At home

- (a) Repeated signs of reluctance to go to school

- (b) Lower standard of studies and reluctance to study
- (c) Physical signs of having been bullied (damaged pieces of clothing or other belongings, physical injuries)
- (d) Repeated loss property and/or money
- (e) Sleeping problems, bad dreams, nightmares
- (f) Eating disorders, lack of appetite
- (g) Change of behaviour and/or emotional state (including unusual outbursts, aggression or depression)
- (h) Lack of interest in going out with friends

At school

- (a) Reluctance to go out to play
- (b) Concentration problems in class
- (c) Avoiding mates and staying in the vicinity of adults in the playground
- (d) Withdrawn and distressed behaviour
- (e) Aggressive behaviour with peers without apparent reason
- (f) Refuse to speak about the problem when asked or give unlikely excuses or explanations
- (g) have possessions go missing regularly
- (h) Physical signs of having been bullied (damaged pieces of clothing or other belongings, physical injuries)
- (i) Repeated loss property and/or money

IV. Intervention and Follow-up

It is of paramount importance that pupils are encouraged to report any form of bullying, discrimination or harassment to an adult in case they are bullied themselves or are witnesses of such event/actions. It may also be useful in this respect to create a group of teachers who are willing to listen to the pupils reporting such instances on a strictly confidential basis. These groups could also be composed, for example, of teachers, school psychologist, educational advisor or designated trusted person... Their respective roles in the groups should be well defined. These groups are to be created on a voluntary basis and provided with necessary training. It is worth considering the involvement of senior pupils in the groups as well as pupils often feel more secure when talking about such incidents to peers.

When a case is reported by the victim or a witness, it is vital that it is taken seriously and followed up by designated staff. Although the methodology of the follow-up may vary, the following guidelines may be useful in all cases.

- (a) Try to find out what has happened as thoroughly as possible. Make a full written record of evidence from all parties involved.
- (b) Make sure from the very beginning that the matter is regarded as a priority and is taken seriously.
- (c) Listen to both sides of the story separately. If it is appropriate and necessary, bring both parties together.
- (d) Inform parents/carers as soon as possible. Meet them in person if possible and listen to both versions of the story.
- (e) Discuss the case with appropriate staff members.
- (f) If necessary, refer the case to the disciplinary council.
- (g) Sanctions should be proportionate to the offence and follow the regulations of the General Rules of the European schools⁷.
- (h) In very serious and repeated cases, permanent exclusion may be considered.
- (i) Make contact with all concerned to ensure people understand what is happening and the action taken.
- (j) Monitor the situation. It is vital that victims are provided with support after the event.

V. Victims' Rights

In line with the EU strategy on victims' rights (2020-2025)⁸ adopted by the European Commission on 24 June 2021, schools should create an environment that makes sure that victims' rights are established and safeguarded. The elements of the policy regarding this issue will normally reflect on the following areas:

- effective communication with victims and a safe environment for victims to report crime;
- improving support and protection to the most vulnerable victims;
- strengthening cooperation and coordination among all relevant actors.

The concrete measures to be taken should be developed locally on school level. Nevertheless, these measures are supposed to involve education and raising awareness for all actors (pupils and staff in cooperation with the parents' associations), transparency and effective communication with victims regarding the disciplinary actions taken including councils (taking always in considerations the relevant rules and regulations and GDPR principles). Attention should also be paid to the follow-up of the victims including, if necessary, experts in the area (care-teams, school psychologist, etc.).

On the other hand, bullies need help too, including, if necessary, experts in the area (care-teams, school psychologist, etc.). Humanistic approaches in dealing with the phenomenon, such as the 'No

⁷ General Rules of the European Schools. 2014-03-D-14-en-10. Chapter VI.

⁸ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0258>

blame approach' and the 'Method of Shared Concern' are very important as they aim at bringing change in the way bullies and bystanders think and feel about the incidents that occur and are witnessed.

The running of 'peer support/befriending groups' composed on a voluntary basis from peers willing to exert positive influence upon the pupils who act as bullies in order to change their behaviour on the one hand, and to offer friendship, support and emotional comfort to the bullied on the other hand, gives the pupils the opportunity to view bullying as a problem among peers, which they themselves can work on together effectively.

Part Five Good Behaviour Policy

I. Introduction

Being happy is probably one of the most common dreams human beings have. Feeling well within ourselves is a common desire. In recent years, we have started to speak about well-being much more. In schools, the philosophy of education goes beyond success in examinations and high-quality teaching. A holistic education gives importance to the well-being of pupils and staff in a school. If a person feels content, self-confident, fulfilled and respected, then they will most probably do better educationally or professionally. A good sense of well-being is achieved when a number of factors, support and services are in place. Behaviour management is one of these factors.

In many of our schools, the general experience of pupil behavior is a positive one. Most pupils know what is acceptable behavior and are cooperative, as well as, being supported by their teachers, other school staff and also their families. However, as do other schools, there are moments when the behavior manifested is not the desired behavior and thus each school needs to have a clear policy on the management of behavior and the promotion of good behaviour.

The aim of this document is to provide a framework for European Schools. These policy guidelines are aimed at providing a framework by which European Schools are supported and helped to develop their own Good Behaviour policies based on their school reality and needs.

These policy guidelines have been developed with the intention of providing a comprehensive set of support for pupils, teachers, parents and others who wish to promote the desired and acceptable behaviour of children in the school, as well as clarifying the measures in place to guide pupils in achieving these goals. Good behaviour is conducive to creating a climate where teaching and learning can take place in a serene and effective manner.

The policy is in line with the general aims of the European Schools; to encourage tolerance, co-operation, communication and openness to others both within and outside the school. The policy guidelines describe our expectations and general principles in terms of behaviour management, the systems and processes we have in place to promote and manage behaviour, and the tools we have in place to make this possible.

This Good Behaviour Policy forms part of the Well-Being Strategy of the European Schools. Such strategy also includes policy guidelines in the area of Child Protection, Anti-Bullying, Anti-Substance Abuse and Health and Safety.

II. Definition and Reference to Values of the Schools

Behavior is the way one acts or conducts themselves, especially in relation to other persons and/or situations. In schools, we expect all persons to behave well. Pupils' good behavior is especially important and is a necessary condition to learning. All persons in a school benefit when there is good

behavior. When behavior is good, learning is not disrupted, teaching can take place and parents have the knowledge that their child is in a safe, supportive environment, while school staff can carry out their duties serenely and productively. In general, in the European Schools, pupils behave correctly. In the instances, where misbehavior occurs it is important for each school to have clear procedures that are graded in nature in accordance with the severity of the manifested behavior.

III. Intervention

A Good Behaviour policy should include gradual actions that are taken by the school so that the correction of the misbehavior so as to engage and propose a learning process for the pupil concerned. It is important to tackle and deal with inappropriate behaviour in an educational manner and also in a graded approach in accordance with the nature and severity of the manifested behaviour.

Most elements of misbehavior will occur in a classroom setting and this is the first place that behavior management comes into place. In the few cases, where misbehavior continues, escalates or manifests itself in a severe way, then the consequences to deal with the situation needs to correspond, always having as its ultimate aim an educational value.

Below is a possible structure schools can consider when designing their Good Behaviour Policy.

Inappropriate Behaviours	Possible Actions
<p>Level 1 Making it difficult for everyone in the classroom to learn to learn and difficult for the teacher to teach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not using good manners (bad words, hitting) - Noisy and irresponsible movement within the school. - Disrespecting other people's property. - Behaving in a dangerous way. - Not staying focused on learning in class. - Show no respect for others. 	<p>Level 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The teacher gives a Level 1 verbal and written warning in the diary and by email to the parents/legal guardians (identify the behaviour, and indicate areas for improvement). - The child needs additional time to reflect or discuss with the teacher. - The child may be seated alone in class to be able to focus and to complete work, not sitting with peers.
<p>Level 2 A child has already received a Level 1 warning, but continues to engage in similar unacceptable behaviour.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The teacher gives an oral and written Level 2 warning. - A more serious incident occurs that leads to greater disruption in the classroom or activities - His/her actions or insults deliberately hurt another child. 	<p>Level 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The teacher gives a Level 2 verbal and written warning in the diary and by email to the parents/legal guardians (identify the behaviour, and indicate areas for improvement) - The teacher and parents/legal guardians have a conversation without the child. - The child is asked to apologise and guarantee not to do the same thing again. This can be either an explanatory drawing or in writing for older children. - The child may be asked to leave the classroom for a period of time in a neighbouring class with the consent of the teacher. - Extra work or tasks may be considered. The child may lose part of the recess and be required to do an activity that benefits the school community (e.g., improve the school community).

Inappropriate Behaviours	Possible Actions
<p>Level 3 A child with a Level 2 warning continues to engage in similar unacceptable behaviour.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The teacher gives an oral and written Level 3 warning 	<p>Level 3 The child may be excluded from certain activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An email is sent to parents/guardians to inform them and to advise them on behaviour. - Parents are invited to meet with the teacher and the child to discuss the behaviour and set targets for improvement. - The child may be asked to carry out a reflection exercise to examine his or her behaviour more closely (resources exist in many forms including questionnaires, forms that are of a self-evaluation nature). - Conversation between school psychologist and child may be an option at this level
<p>Level 4 A child has received a Level 3 warning but continues to persistently disrupt school life, or the child is violent or the actions are dangerous or the child is violent or threatening.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The child makes an inappropriate remark. - Any other incident left to the discretion of the school director. 	<p>Level 4 The Assistant Deputy Director of the Nursery and Primary cycles (or any other member of staff delegated by the school management) informs the parents of the incident.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The child fills in a reflection form to review his/her behaviour and to suggest improvements. In some cases, a discussion between the parents, the educational team, and the director of the nursery and primary cycles meets to discuss the situation. - Disciplinary Council. - Temporary exclusion from school possible. - Conversation between school psychologist and child.
<p>Level 5 Disciplinary measures may be considered if the situation is serious or aggravates over time. Disciplinary measures have the purpose of educating and training and are in line with Chapter VI of the General Rules of the European Schools</p>	<p>Level 5 Serious breaches of discipline are reported to the Director and a written report from the cycle concerned is submitted to the Director on the first working day following the incident.</p> <p>There are number of disciplinary measures that can be imposed. In the nursery/primary cycle these include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Reprimand. 2) Extra work (such as work that benefits the school community). 3) Detention. 4) Warning and/or sanction by the Director. 5) Warning and/or sanction by the Director on a proposal from the Discipline Council. 6) Temporary exclusion from the school <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - by the Director, for a maximum of three working days - by the Director, on a proposal from the Discipline Council, for a maximum of 15 working days. 7) Exclusion from one or more school trips organised during the current school year. 8) Systematic interaction with the school psychologist or another therapist.

Inappropriate Behaviours	Possible Actions
	<p>Expulsion for the school is not possible in the nursery/primary cycle as a result of a disciplinary procedure. However, there may be instances, especially where safety of a health risk becomes an issue, when the Director may decide to place the guardianship of a child back in the parents' hands, if serious care and attention is needed to ensure the well-being of all.</p> <p>Disciplinary measures listed from point 3 to 7 are entered in the pupil's persons file. The school will develop a retention policy for each of these records so as to have a fair and transparent system applicable to all pupils.</p> <p>In a serious case, involving a risk to safety or health in the school, the Director may, as a precaution, return a pupil to the care of his/her legal representatives pending the convening of the Discipline Council.</p> <p>The pupil's legal representatives shall be informed of all disciplinary measures, with the exception of reprimands.</p> <p>Information about Disciplinary Councils may be found in Article 44 of the General Rules of the European Schools and this includes the possibility of appeal against a temporary exclusion.</p>

IV. Follow-up

Any situation of misbehaviour necessitates observation and follow up if needed. School staff know well that at times misbehavior is often contained, overcome and matters progress smoothly. At other times, misbehavior can be a symptom of deeper difficulties that need to be monitored and addressed so that each and every child can come to school in a serene manner and learn to develop to their full potential.

Part Six Anti-Substance (Ab)use Policy

I. Introduction

In the course of their development, young people face many challenges that may affect their health and well-being, including exposure to harmful substances (hereinafter, substances), such as alcohol, tobacco, and drugs (medicines, volatile substances, illegal drugs, new psychoactive substances and other unauthorised substances).

Moreover, adolescence and young adulthood are periods of risk-taking and experimentation that often includes substances use.⁹ In this context, the Schools play an important role in promoting pupils' well-being, including the prevention of substances misuse/abuse.

In line with the principles established by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), the European Schools system aims at ensuring the schools to provide evidence-based prevention programmes and have appropriate anti-substance abuse policies in place. These should aim not only to reduce substance use, but also to reduce violence, improve learning, produce better academic achievements and create a better school climate, outcomes that are of intrinsic interest to education in the European Schools.

The European Schools system aims at reflecting upon how it might provide for the needs of their pupils and respond appropriately to the issue of substance (ab)use, that also involves sensitive and emotive aspects.

The distinctive feature of the European Schools system, whose schools are hosted by and in different Member States, with their own regulations at national/regional level, entails the development of a framework that should be applied at system level and complemented by the national/regional regulations. This circumstance requires that each school develops its own anti-substance abuse policy to build the bridge between the global/system-wide concepts and the national/local contexts.

The framework presented below is based on the best practices pointed out by European Institutions, and on the existing school regulations regarding substance abuse that have already been developed in different European Schools that were used as inspiration. This document aims at establishing guiding principles regarding prevention and management of situations of substance abuse, including the provision of specific training to enable different school actors to prevent and manage the situations of substance abuse.

The anti-substance abuse system-wide framework and the schools' specific policies must be articulated with existing regulations and policies, namely the Child Protection policy, the General Rules in the European Schools, Schools specific rules and policies related to well-being, health and safety, behaviour,...

⁹ EMCDDA https://www.emcdda.europa.eu/best-practice/briefings/schools-and-colleges_en

The main objectives of this framework and the related school-level policy are the following:

- To reinforce prevention activities and to increase awareness about substances misuse.
- To reinforce and safeguard the health and safety of pupils and the whole school community;
- To ensure that the environment of schools is kept safe and substance abuse free.
- To prevent any risk and harm to pupils and other individuals that may result from substance abuse.
- To inform pupils, their parents/legal representatives, staff and others, about the measures to be taken by the school in the situations of when substances are found or used in schools.
- To provide school staff with a practical tool that enables them to intervene in an appropriate manner when a substance is found or used in schools.
- To clarify the legal requirements and responsibilities of the school and other services and authorities.
- To clarify the procedures for responding to and managing any substance-related incidents that may occur so that they are managed with confidence and consistency and in the best interests of those involved.
- To provide a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the school and the management of incidents involving use of substances.
- Clarify the necessity to provide training in this area for the staff and other partners working with/in the school; and to provide ongoing information session for pupils and parents/legal representatives.

This framework and schools' policy:

- apply to all school staff, pupils, parents/legal representatives, and other partners working with/in the school;
- apply to the school premises, the school day, while travelling to and from school, journeys in school time, work experience, day and residential trips.
- must be communicated to all pupils and parents, who must clearly attest the acknowledgment of this policy.

II. Principles

- An effective policy of prevention and management of substance abuse requires a **whole school approach**. It needs to be developed with relevant consultation and involvement of all stakeholders.
- Structures for developing a school substance use policy should ideally be based on **existing school structures for promotion of well-being and health** and should involve the participation of management, teachers, parents' representatives, pupils, non-teaching staff,

namely those with responsibility in health promotion, safety and security, data protection, invigilation of pupils and other relevant groups.

- The school anti-substance abuse policy should be **clearly communicated** as it **needs to be acknowledged, understood and respected** by all stakeholders, including pupils, staff, parents and others who interact with the school.
- The school anti-substance abuse policy should be **aligned with other policies** related to well-being and health promotion established at school level but also according to national/local regulations.
- In the schools, the **focus should be mainly on preventing** or delaying the initiation of substance use and on the development of skills to support healthy decision-making.
- Response interventions need to address **the wider determinants of risky and impulsive behaviour** rather than the substance use in isolation.
- Prevention interventions in schools should aim at having an impact on **the whole pupil population** and staff.
- Prevention programmes should focus on **developing social competences and refusal skills, healthy decision-making skills**, and correcting normative misperceptions about substance use.
- The European Schools are an **environment free of consumption, possession, and especially the sale or sharing of any harmful substances**: alcohol, tobacco, drugs, including the new psychoactive substances.
- The well-being of every pupil is the central concern of the European Schools. As such, **pupils affected by their own or other's drug misuse should have early access to support** through the school and other services.
- **All staff members are accountable for acting** and reporting situations of substance misuse, including sharing or sale of substances.
- The **procedures to be followed** in case of suspicion or detection of substance misuse should be **clear to all members** of the staff;
- **Training on the area of prevention and management** of case of substances abuse should be made available to the relevant members of the staff.
- The schools must **respect the national/local regulations** concerning search and confiscation of substances, intervention of local/national authorities (police, health and social services and organisations) in those cases and reporting duties concerning substance-related incidents.

It is important to remember that prevention and a clear and ongoing information policy are crucial in managing cases of substance abuse. Sanctions will be applicable when necessary.

III. Prevention

Prevention of substance misuse should be focussed on promoting healthy behaviour, building healthy lifestyles and equipping pupils to face and respond appropriately to the challenges they will face in with respect to health-related issues, including the use of substances.¹⁰

The school's specific policy should establish a consistent and continuous prevention plan throughout the school educational continuum, adapted to the development of pupils in the different cycles.

The plan should be based on good practices for which there is good evidence of effectiveness on prevention. It should include and clarify:

- Measures to identify, at an early stage, pupils that are at increased risk of developing problematic forms of substance use, as for example poor school attenders, frequent truants or young people with behavioural problems, such as poor impulse control;
- The process of identifying needs should aim to distinguish between pupils who require general information and education, those who could benefit from targeted prevention, and those who require a detailed needs assessment and more intensive support.
- Activities intentionally organised to promote the development of social competences and refusal skills, healthy decision-making skills;
- Activities to provide accurate, relevant and targeted information on the different substances and the consequences of their (ab)use;
- Activities directed to pupils, parents and other individuals intended to prevent risk and to reduce harm resulting from substance (ab)use;
- The responsibility of the different staff members for the development and implementation of the prevention plan;
- The involvement with local voluntary organisations, health partners, the police and others to prevent substance (ab)use.

IV. Management of Substance Use related Incidents

The school policy should establish the procedure to respond to substance-related incidents in a planned, considered and balanced way.

The main purpose of these procedures is the **preservation of the health and safety of the school community** and to respond to behaviour contrary to the General Rules of the European Schools and the school's rules.

Incidents involving substances use - alcohol, tobacco and drugs - might include:

¹⁰https://www.emcdda.europa.eu/attachements.cfm/att_231062_EN_SI01_Guidelines_recommendations_school-based%20prevention_utrip.pdf

- Use or suspected use of substances on the school premises or during a school-related activity;
- Intoxication/unusual behaviour;
- Finding these substances and/or associated paraphernalia;
- Incitement/share and sale to the consumption of substances;
- Possession and/or supply on the school premises or during a school-related activity.

If a pupil is suspected of being under the influence of substances on school grounds, the first priority is his/her safety and that of the pupils around him/her.

If necessary, such situations may be handled as a **medical emergency**.

It will be a **systematic** process to call parents/legal representatives and, if required according to the national/regional rules, inform the police or other authorities.

On the other hand, if the school feels that the child is in danger, it may be necessary to call social services.

Certain cases may include referral to a support agency or to the national authorities. In some cases, it may be necessary to seek legal advice.

The School policy should also establish:

- The responsibility of the different staff members in dealing with the incidents, including the key roles, co-ordination and monitoring;
- The power of the members of the staff and the protocol to search (including personal searches and searches of school and pupils' property) and confiscate substances (how, where to store, whom and how to report);
- The different procedures related to the different substances (legal, illegal substances) according to the national/regional legislation;
- The referral procedure: what, how, to whom and when;
- Consent issues;
- Working and liaising with the Police /authorities (information, consultation or active involvement);
- Support and disciplinary responses to the situations and incidents;
- Clarify confidentiality issues/information sharing;
- Dissemination plans including the availability on the school's website;
- The context of the policy and its relationship to other policies;
- Involvement of parents/legal representatives;

- If necessary: Definitions and terminology.

Schools should ensure that pupils have access to and knowledge of up-to-date information on sources of help.

Pupils and parents should clearly attest the acknowledgment of this policy.

V. Provision for Training and Staff Development

In order to implement an effective anti-substance abuse policy, school staff must have access to high quality training and support.

The Policy should outline:

- Measures and forms of in-service training of staff, namely management team, teachers, educational advisors, safety and security officers and other relevant non-teaching staff members, in the area of prevention;
- Induction and substance abuse awareness training arrangements for all staff working at the school;
- Specific continuing professional development opportunities for substance use education teachers and how this will be cascaded.

VI. Monitoring and Evaluation

The policy should also include the monitoring and evaluation procedures determining:

- Who will do what, when, to see how the policy is working?
- Success Criteria: What indicators will be used to measure the effectiveness of the policy?

Annex – Examples of school activities and measure to prevent and intervene in substance (ab)use situations

Prevention:

Drug Education Content

Education for drug abuse prevention should be seen to include both formal and informal health curricula, the creation of a safe and healthy school environment, the provision of appropriate health services and support as well as the involvement of the family and the community in the planning and delivery of programme

Information given to pupils as an integral part of “learning“ in the broadest sense of that term, based on two-way communication, and respectful of the feelings and attitudes of pupils, is more likely to be retained and used. One-off Drug Information sessions that simply throw out “facts“ about drugs may in fact prove to be counterproductive.¹¹

Nursery and Primary -

Examples:

11-14 (S1-S3) year olds should be taught about the effects of alcohol and tobacco, personal safety in being able to manage risky situations, drugs and alcohol misuse and peer pressure relating to substance misuse.

14-16 (S4-S5) year olds should be taught that to evaluate the social and emotional risks of drugs use including county lines, taking responsibilities for choices including risk taking and personal safety., tackling mental health and the effects that can be linked with alcohol and substance misuse.

- includes specific drugs education such as “facts and laws about drug, alcohol and tobacco use and misuse, and the personal and social consequences of misuse for themselves”, “ways of recognising and reducing risk, minimising harm and getting help in emergency and risky situations” as well as other topics that reflect knowledge, understanding, attitudes and social skills. Pupils complete accredited NCFE Level Courses in Substance and Alcohol Misuse.
- Citizenship/Ethics/Other subjects... contributes to drug education e.g. by providing opportunities to understand rules and laws and how they relate to rights and responsibilities, to explore moral, social and cultural issues and to discuss and debate topical issues.

External Drugs Education

- Visitors are invited in to school because of their particular expertise or contribution they are able to make; invitations to visitors should be cleared with the Management.
- All visitors must be appropriately qualified and trained to deliver work with children and young people in a school setting.
- All visitors must have a clear understanding of the aims and objectives of the session and have seen and understood the school’s drug education policy.
- All visitors must be aware of the school’s protocols for dealing with any disclosures or distress shown by pupils during the session.

¹¹ *School-based education for drug abuse prevention* – UNITED NATIONS – Office on Drugs and Crime
https://www.unodc.org/pdf/youthnet/handbook_school_english.pdf

- Staff must ensure that they reflect on the learning from particular sessions with pupils and visitors, assessing the learning, and building skills to support and enable pupils to make healthy choices and to avoid risk-taking behaviour.
- Staff must follow-up any unresolved issues or concerns and extend the learning begun by the visitor.
- All visitors are supervised and supported by a member of staff at all times unless alternative arrangements have been agreed with the management.

Annex - Example of sanctions and measures to put in place in case of substance (ab)use

As a reference, the scale of sanctions and measures envisaged will be as follows:

Fault /offense	Immediate action	Inform police	Official follow-up	Possible sanctions
Noticed in: school, on school trip * on school activity	(teacher/ advisor/ CPE)			
Being under influence of a drug (suspected)	Infirmiry sends student home if suspicion confirmed.		Formal Interview with Secondary School Management Repeat offense(s): School Board of Directors	Secondary School Director, according to Art. 42B, Rgl EE. Days of suspension medical injunction; Disciplinary hearing if repeat offender.
Possession of drugs	Confiscation of substance. Call family, who should come as quickly as possible.	Yes - and substance is turned over to them.	Release to family possible. Report to Director. Possibly summons to Disciplinary Council	Decision of Disciplinary Council with sanctions up to and including permanent expulsion possible.
Consumption of narcotics	Confiscation of substance. Infirmiry visit. Call family, who should come as quickly as possible.		Report to Director. Formal Interview with School Board of Directors.	Secondary School Director / Art 42B. Suspension or permanent expulsion possible.
Sharing or sale of narcotics	Confiscation of substance. Call family, who should come as quickly as possible.	Yes - substance turned over to them and filing of complaint for endangering the welfare of students.	Report to director. Formal Interview with School Board of Directors	Disciplinary Council Sanctions up to and including permanent expulsion possible. Legal proceedings also possible.
Incitement, (verbal, written, or via imagery) to use drugs.	Meeting w/ student. Inform family.		Meeting with parents. Request medical intervention if necessary.	Follow-up and individual meetings. School Community service related to Drug prevention.

* School trip: immediate call to the family to pick up the student without delay.

Part Seven Health, Safety and Security Policy

I. Introduction

The European Schools are committed to providing a healthy, safe and secure learning environment for pupils. In general, health, safety and security-related issues are governed by the overarching health, safety and security policies of the European Schools and the host country's legislation. With respect to child well-being, there are specific health, safety and security subjects, which are not covered by these overarching policies. These are dealt with in this chapter.

II. Specific Health, Safety and Security Issues to Pupils' Well-being

II.1. Hiring of Staff

The school will request a copy of the criminal record (or equivalent document from the country of residence) for all staff of the European Schools.

II.2. Comfort

Classrooms, laboratories, gymnasiums and other similar places where pupils assemble must be:

- well-lit;
- appropriately heated;
- appropriately ventilated; and
- of an appropriate size for the classes using them.

II.3. Furniture

The school will provide fixed and adjustable chairs, stools and tables respecting the EN 1729 standard.

II.4. Physical Education Equipment

The equipment for physical education will be regularly inspected by a competent service provider.

II.5. Playground Equipment

The School will only purchase and install playground equipment respecting the EN 1176 standard. The maintenance and periodic controls of these equipment will be conducted according to the criteria stipulated in this norm.

To guarantee the safety of the pupils in case of impact, the playground surface will be determined and constructed in accordance with the EN 1177 standard.

II.6. Medical Information and Allergies

Parents will provide the school with relevant information concerning their child's specific medical conditions and allergies on a "need to know" basis, taking into consideration medical advice and parents' wishes. All medical information is handled in a strictly confidential manner by the schools' medical department.

II.7. Hygiene and Cleanliness

The school will provide a clean environment for pupils. It will also raise awareness with pupils and staff to keep the premises clean and tidy.

Good hygiene and cleanliness can be achieved, *inter alia*, through:

- Frequent and thorough cleaning of the school site and classrooms with particular attention to areas for food preparation and consumption, toilets and showers;
- Provision of water, soap and drying facilities in toilets. The School may decide upon a menstrual product which is provided free of charge to the pupils;
- Encouraging hygienic behaviour among users;
- Regular monitoring of the quality of the water and general hygiene in swimming pools, according to local regulations.

II.8. Healthy Food

The school will promote and encourage healthy eating habits. Pupils will have a pause during the school day so as to consume their lunch.

II.9. Traffic Hazards

The school will protect pupils from traffic hazards when on the schools' property or in the schools' care (e.g. outings, field trips).

II.10. School Field Trips

Prior to field trips the school is required to perform a risk assessment. The accompanying teachers must be fully involved in this assessment.

Parents must be kept fully informed of all aspects of school expeditions in which their children are involved.